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Making the Most of the Volunteer Experience for Both the Volunteer and the

Community Based Organization:

What Can Be Learned from a Review of the Literature and Research

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Title: Making the Most of the Volunteer Experience for Both the Volunteer and the Community Based Organization: What Can Be Learned from a Review of the Literature and Research

By: Rachel Skoff

Abstract:

Approximately 61 million Americans are engaged in volunteering and 26% of American households have at least one volunteer (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007). In this time when many community based organizations are turning to volunteers to assist them in carrying out their goals, it is important for their own benefit, as well as for the benefit of the volunteers, that they understand how to structure and assess the many aspects of a volunteer program. This literature review discusses the research and the implications of it in the areas of: volunteer motivation; screening training and supporting volunteers; volunteer empowerment; age, gender and disability as they relate to the volunteer experience; particular issues that schools must consider when using volunteers; legal issues which impact agencies; and best practices that have been developed for volunteer programs. Additionally, it provides forms that can be used as models to help assess motivation and skills of potential volunteers, as well as to evaluate their performance.

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Volunteering is very prevalent in our society. It has almost become a rite of passage for many high school and college students. Older adults, who are looking for something meaningful to do with their time, often turn to volunteering. Organizations, partly, though not solely in an effort to save money, are relying on volunteers to fill needs in their organization. The responsibilities given to these volunteers, in community based organizations, have a wide range. Volunteers can be called upon to do anything from fundraising, marketing, budget planning, strategic planning, home visits, tutoring, clerical work, outreach work, mentoring, etc. Organizations, in today's world, clearly depend on and need volunteers.

Individuals, in contemporary society, are looking to volunteer their time, for many reasons. Younger volunteers are often looking to gain work experience, try out different fields, and make a positive impact on their world. Older volunteers often are looking for something meaningful to be a part of after they retire, and perhaps, to utilize the expertise that they have acquired during their working life.

Ideally, this sets up a situation which should be a perfect match— organizations that are looking for volunteers and volunteers that are looking for organizations. However, frequently organizations don't have the necessary background and knowledge about volunteers and about successful volunteer

programs, to use their own volunteers in the most appropriate or meaningful or productive way.

Organizations frequently don't recruit and match their volunteers appropriately for the tasks they want them to perform, and also, frequently do not train them effectively. As a result, volunteers may often leave frustrated or unhappy with the work and their volunteer experience. Often there is a discrepancy between what the recruiters for a volunteer program may say, and the actual experience itself.

On a personal note, I have volunteered in many different community based settings and have had a range of experiences. Some have been transformative, in the best way possible, and others have been unsatisfying. The ones that were unsatisfying were the ones where the organizers didn't know how to utilize and manage volunteers and integrate them appropriately into the organization.

When I volunteered in a well established Literacy Program in the community, although I thought it was well run in many ways, I felt that I lacked one-on-one, personal feedback and supervision. There was no time set aside for me to have private meetings with supervisors. There was no time to discuss individual children, their specific learning styles, and what strategies might work. I understand that this is a large program and is designed to allow the maximum volunteers and the maximum number of children, to be able to move in and out of the tutoring. However, I never developed a personal relationship with any supervisor, and I think that I, therefore, did not connect to the program

in a way that I found satisfying. When I compare this to other, more fulfilling experiences, I come to the conclusion that structures need to be put in place to assure a good experience. I believe that the more an agency learns about how to successfully integrate volunteers, the better it is for the volunteer and the better it is for the agency.

I believe that a literature review would be very useful for agencies that use volunteers. I think that there is very little standardized training for volunteer coordinators. A literature review provides a context! By understanding the research, the volunteer coordinator will have a context to understand his/her own program. Instead of having each agency reinvent the wheel, they can learn from past studies. It can be useful in so many practical ways—such as understanding the legal requirements, understanding how specific motivations of specific volunteers factors in, understanding best practices, etc. I also believe that it can be used to start a dialogue with the volunteers, which can lead to a deeper relationship between the volunteer and the agency.

In order to assess the usefulness and practicality of this project, I have given this literature review to the Volunteer Coordinator at a social service agency, which utilizes volunteers in a variety of capacities, and asked for her feedback. They are included at the end of the paper. Also included at the very end of the paper are sample forms and documents, which were adapted and developed out of this review of the literature, and may be useful to volunteer organizations.

II. Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

This paper will address some of the major issues surrounding volunteering. It will provide a literature review which can be used by community based organizations that incorporate volunteers, or are considering incorporating volunteers.

Volunteering is very common in our society. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2007), 61 million, or 26% of American households, have at least one volunteer. The median age of volunteers in the United States is 49, though 24% of teenagers do some volunteer work. 28% of volunteers are employed, and 25% of volunteers learn about volunteer opportunities through their workplace.

What motivates people to volunteer? How can agencies institute successful volunteer recruitment programs? Which segments (gender, age) of our society are more likely to volunteer? How should training and supervision be addressed? What legal issues must be considered? In general, what should an agency consider when it considers its volunteer program.

MOTIVATION

One of the most important tools an organization can have to make it successful in recruiting volunteers is an understanding of what motivates people to volunteer. The importance of understanding the motivation of volunteers does

not end with recruitment. It also can help an organization structure its volunteer program in such a way that it fulfills the goals of the volunteer. Once an organization is aware of the motivations of its volunteers, it is making a big step to setting up a successful volunteer program. The literature in this area also can also guide an organization when it is trying to target a particular type of volunteer for a particular function.

Clary et al. (1998), studied the motivations of volunteers through a **functional approach** and presented their research in the article, *Understanding and Assessing the motivations of Volunteers: A Functional Approach.* The functional approach considers the personal and social functions that are served by volunteering. This theory is based on the idea that different people do the same thing for different reasons and that the same activity serves different functions in different people. "The core propositions of a functional analysis of volunteerism are that acts of volunteerism that appear to be quite similar on the surface may reflect markedly different underlying motivational processes" (1998: 1517).

Specifically the authors came up with six motivational functions served by volunteerism. These six are: values, understanding, social, career, protective, and enhancement.

Values means that volunteering gives people an opportunity to express values such as concern for other people. Understanding means that volunteering gives people an opportunity to learn new things and to develop skills and abilities in areas that they are interested in. The social function means that volunteering can give people a chance to be with friends or to do something that

other people in the community think is important. The career function refers to the fact that career benefits can be gained from volunteer work. The protective function has to do with the volunteer's ego and the fact that by volunteering they may be protecting themselves from, for example, feeling guilty about being privileged. The sixth function, enhancement, has to do with the fact that volunteering serves the function of giving the volunteer a sense of personal development and personal growth.

Beginning with the theory that there is a wide range of personal and social motivations that prompt people to volunteer, the authors developed a Volunteer Functions Inventory—VFI by which to measure an individual's motivation. They then used this inventory to study various population groups. Here is a selection from the survey questions/statements that people were asked to respond to:

Values—

I feel it is important to help others.

I am genuinely concerned about the particular group I am serving.

Protective—

No matter how bad I've been feeling, volunteering helps me to forget about it.

Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others.

Career—

I can make new contacts that might help my business or career.

Volunteering experiences will look good on my resume.

Understanding—

I can learn more about the cause for which I am working.

In order to test their hypothesis that the volunteers who had higher scores on the functional benefits of volunteering would also find volunteering more satisfying, the authors analyzed satisfaction scores as a function of volunteers' scores on each VFI scale and their scores on each of the functional benefit scales. Their conclusions supported their hypothesis. Volunteers who received functionally relevant benefits were more satisfied with their volunteer service. "These results therefore provide support for the functionalist proposition that life outcomes, such as satisfaction with volunteer activity, depend on the match between an individual's motivational goals and the fulfillment of those goals." (Clary et al., 1998: 1525). Their research also supports the idea that successful volunteering occurs when individuals pursue agendas that reflect important features of self and identity. In addition, their findings agree with research that says that the most successful experiences are that in which the person and the situation are well matched and well fit to each other.

There are practical implications from this study for organizations which use volunteers. The first is that organizations should realize that volunteers see volunteerism through their own personal motivations. Therefore, an organization seeking volunteers should have a "persuasive message". (Clary et al., 1998: 1527) Secondly the organization should realize that it's important to have a good fit, which means that the roles the volunteers serve in should match

the volunteer's own motivations. Therefore the organization should take the time and make the effort to understand this with each of its volunteers. They should try to "maximize the extent to which they provide volunteer opportunities that afford benefits matched to their volunteers' motivations and, in so doing, perhaps lessen the rate of turnover their volunteer labor force" (1998: 1528).

Dolnicar and Randle (2007) point to criticisms of the VFI for taking a narrow approach, by only considering the benefits of volunteering, and leaving out other decision making factors that go into volunteering. They believe that the most useful approach to understanding volunteer motivation and then being able to use that information to recruit more volunteers, is to apply the concept of "market segmentation" to the area of volunteerism.. "Market segmentation is a standard and well-known concept in strategic marketing. The objective is to identify subgroups of individuals who are similar to each other with regard to some predefined criterion" (2007: 139). This has proved to be a successful strategy in marketing in the business world. Applying the theory of market segmentation to volunteerism, the researchers break down the segments of the "volunteer market" into six subgroups. These are:

1) "Classic Volunteers" –want to do something worthwhile, gain personal satisfaction and help others. These are typically older, past their active stage in the work force and very dedicated to volunteering.

2) "Dedicated Volunteers"—are those who dedicate the most hours per year

3) "Personally Involved Volunteers" volunteer temporarily in an organization in which they are already affiliated with (like their children's schools)

4) "Volunteers for Personal Satisfaction" are those who volunteer to gain their own satisfaction

5) "Altruists" are those who volunteer in order to befriend or help out people in need

6) "Niche Volunteers" are young, educated, new to the volunteering industry and volunteer for reasons such as religious beliefs or gaining work experience.

Each of these segments, according to the research done by Dolnicar and Randle,

> Demonstrate clear and distinct motivational patterns and differ significantly from each other regarding background variable of both a sociodemographic and behavioral nature…..Essentially what this means is that instead of developing generic recruitment campaigns which are expensive and of limited meaning to many of the individuals they actually reach, managers of volunteering organizations can make better and more efficiently use of their limited marking dollars….by designing campaigns specifically targeted at those groups of the market the have the most chance of attracting with messages that are the most meaningful and motivating for them. (2007: 122-123).

In other words, the public sector should use the same marketing techniques to attract volunteers that for-profit companies use to attract customers. There is much to be learned from the profit world.

Until now, we have only considered theories that volunteers are motivated to volunteer for personal reasons. Is it possible, though, that the government can have an influence in this area? Does anything the government do cause people to become more civic minded or more motivated to volunteer? Leslie Lenkowsky (2004) worked, for two years, on the Bush administrations initiatives to encourage volunteering, and offers her reflections. Basically, her answer is that it is hard to tell.

Lenkowsky points to reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics which noted an increase in volunteering of 63.8 million people from September 2002 to September 2003. She writes that, "although the federal study did not try to measure the impact of White House policies, the data suggest that its efforts—especially its support for programs that enable schools to offer community-service opportunities as part of academic lessons—probably deserve some credit for last year's increase (2004). The way that the government influences the volunteering rate is by offering stipends and other benefits. An example of this would be AmeriCorps and Vista, where volunteers receive money, from the government, to cover their living expenses. The following is taken from an Idaho government website:

> All VISTA volunteers receive a subsistence allowance every other week to pay for food, housing, and personal expenses. This allowance is subject to Federal & Idaho State incometax. All Idaho VISTAs receive a monthly living allowance of $892.00 (approximately $410.00 **gross** pay every two weeks over 26 pay periods per year). VISTAs net (take home) pay should be about $375 each two week pay period depending on witholding rates (W-4 witholding information & life insurance option).

Of course, stipends really do fundamentally change the volunteer experience. A stipend offers an entirely new motivation than volunteering with no monetary reward at all. So, if the main way the government affects the number of volunteers who are motivated to volunteer by offering them money to do so, the whole equation has really changed. Volunteering is not completely without financial gain. This will affect every aspect of the program from recruitment to retention of volunteers. In addition, another way that government stipends change the equation is by choosing which programs it will grant stipends to. Agencies which get government stipends will be able to get more "volunteers" than those who don't. Certain programs get a boost from having the government willing to put money into their volunteer programs.

Interestingly enough, Lenkowsky points out that according to volunteering statistics, people with jobs are more likely to volunteer than those without them. Of the four million volunteers in 2002, about 2.5 million were employed. Therefore, perhaps the greatest impact the government has is in terms of its economic policies which affect employment in general. At the end of the day, Lenkowsky believes that government efforts to foster a culture of service played only a small role, and that volunteering, is, at the end of the day, largely motivated by personal factors.

Wu Luping (2011) analyzed the motivations of youth in China who volunteer. She divided the motivations into three categories: the traditional motivation which is focused on responsibility, the modern motivation which is focused on development, and, what she calls, the postmodern motivation which

is focused on pleasure. Her study took into consideration the values of traditional Chinese culture and whether or not the person was a member of the Communist party. People in this category would be motivated to volunteer, because, as a citizen, they had a duty and responsibility to serve others, and to do something meaningful for society. However, Wu found that a substantial number of volunteers were motivated by non-traditional motivations. The non-traditional motivations would include things that are more related to personal development such as expanding contacts, seeking employment opportunities, doing specialized research etc. Wu concludes that today's young Chinese volunteers are a new type of volunteer. They are motivated by a postmodern motivation—happiness.

Wu says that there are lessons to be learned from this study.

The lesson from this finding is that, when designing volunteer activity projects, ample attention should be given to the possibility of the volunteers progressing and developing during such activities. And when conducting mobilization in society for volunteer activities, more publicity should be done from the perspective of the development of young people per se rather than sticking solely to the perspective of social needs (2011: 190).

While this has general implications in all societies, I think Wu was particularly responding to the traditional Chinese model where responsibility and duty are being replaced by more self-centered needs and motivations for volunteering. In the past, the needs of the volunteer were not given priority. Now that society is changing, agencies should take that into consideration when they do recruitment and publicity. They should emphasize the personal rewards of volunteering, not just the dutiful aspect of volunteering.

These studies provide a great deal of useful information for organizations. By understanding the function that the experience plays in the life of the volunteer, by understanding the role that government can play in encouraging volunteers, by understanding the relationship between "required volunteering" or "non-required" volunteering", and by being able to see the larger picture of what motivates volunteers, organizations can recruit more successfully, as well as implement their volunteer program more successfully. While it is not necessary to identify each volunteer with one particular motivational category, it is definitely useful to have a general understanding of what each volunteer is hoping to gain from the experience. Younger volunteers who are interested in building their resumes, for example, will relate to the experience differently than volunteers who are already connected to the organization (like parents or grandparents in a school). Their motivation for volunteering in the first place will play out throughout their entire experience. Organizations must have an awareness of this, both for their own internal purposes, and also in order to help the volunteer achieve what he/she came for. After all, if someone is volunteering time in an organization, the organization "owes" them as satisfying experience as they can provide.

EMPOWERMENT: SUCCESSFULLY EMPOWERING VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR OWN BENEFIT AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE ORGANIZATION

It is important that volunteers feel empowered and motivated. If volunteers do not feel their own importance, they will not achieve their

maximum potential. If a volunteer feels "I am only a volunteer, I don't matter that much", that will end up being self-fulfilling prophecy. If, on the other hand, a volunteer feels that what he/she is doing is important and feels empowered, there will be a much more substantial impact.

Kulik and Megidna (2011) examined the variables that contributed to the success and psychological empowerment of female volunteers. They considered motive, as well as other variables. They concluded that the two variables that contributed to the greatest psychological empowerment of volunteers were 1) the quality of their interaction with the clients and 2) the quality of their interactions with the coordinator of volunteer activity. In other words, having good relationships with coordinators and with clients led to satisfaction with their roles and that led to their greater psychological empowerment. Social relationships play the key role. "As such, the social relationships that developed between the volunteers, the coordinators of volunteer activity, and the clients created a complex network of interactions through which the women gained confidence in themselves and empowered other women" (2011: 935).The implication of this for the organization is that the organization needs to direct resources into its volunteer program, and have a sufficient number of volunteer coordinators, so that meaningful relationships are formed between coordinators and volunteers. The ratio of volunteers to volunteer coordinators has to be low enough that these relationships can be established. An organization cannot just have one coordinator for, let's say, a hundred volunteers, and expect good relationships to happen. The organization needs to prioritize this-both in terms of personnel and in terms of financial resources. If the organization, though, does

not have the financial resources to do this, then they should develop a "hierarchy" of volunteers, where some "supervise" others. Experienced volunteers can work with new volunteers. The main takeaway is that a volunteer not feel that he/she is off on their own.

Motivation was also a factor, although not as large a role as the two factors mentioned above. Those who had higher motivation for their volunteering activities--specifically high levels of social motives --were found to have had higher quality social interactions and, therefore, a greater sense of empowerment. If a volunteer was highly motivated, that empowered both the volunteer and the client the volunteer was working with. "The more the volunteers are driven by a desire for personal growth and by altruistic motives, the more they will engage in productive activity and provide essential assistance that leads to psychological empowerment of clients" (Kulik & Megidna, 2011: 934).

In a related study, Jorge Barraza (2011) found that positive emotional expectations predicted volunteer outcomes for new volunteers. "The mere anticipation of positive emotions was able to predict volunteer outcomes for new volunteers. Emotional expectations (i.e., sympathy, satisfaction) were positively associated with intentions to continue volunteering" (2011: 218). Barazza says that the influence of the expectations carries into the actual experience. This is particularly true for new volunteers, and particularly true when volunteers begin their volunteer experience with a positive identification with their role. Expectations that volunteers form before beginning their work as volunteers will

affect their belief that they will continue to volunteer and how much they identify as a volunteer (2011: 217). If a volunteer expected to have satisfaction from volunteering, they were more likely to actually be satisfied. The effect is most seen in new volunteers, but there is also a correlation for volunteers who have done so for a longer time. This is very interesting, because it "goes slightly against the notion that volunteer identities are formed throughout the volunteer experience" (2011: 217).

Barraza found that the first few months of volunteering can be the most "fragile" (2011:218) time for keeping volunteers. This is the time period when the volunteer is deciding whether the actual volunteer experience is consistent with what they had expected it to be. On a practical level, he suggests that organizations do all they can to encourage new volunteers to have as many early satisfying and positive emotional experiences as possible, since this will lead to greater volunteer retention and satisfaction, which will benefit the organization. However, he also has found that what volunteers bring with them prior to their first day at the organization, has a very strong impact on their experience. The implication, for the organization, of that finding is that the organization should look carefully at the attitudes the volunteers have before they begin, because that will tell them a lot about how things will probably go. They should not look at every volunteer as a "generic" volunteer. Each volunteer has his/her own reasons for volunteering, expectations from volunteering, and their own strengths and weaknesses. Another implication is that the organization should try to get things off on the best foot possible, since the beginning is the most fragile time. This should probably be structured into the organization. For

example, at the beginning of the process, the volunteer coordinator might want to accompany the volunteer for a few times. Then, after that, the volunteer coordinator might want to have a phone conference or email after each volunteer experience. Once things seem like they are more stable, the contact does not have to be as frequent, although it should always continue, and the volunteer should always feel that he/she can turn to the coordinator.

Cleg and Johnson (1978) studied whether or not a well developed and well known Job Characteristics Model that had been developed in 1975 by Hackman and Oldham, was applicable to volunteers, or only to people who worked for compensation. Specifically they wanted to know if this model could predict motivation and performance in volunteers. In 1975, Hackman and Oldham had developed their widely used Job Characteristics Model. Their model identifies five characteristics of tasks/jobs that people are asked to do. These are: 1) skill variety, 2) task identity, 3) task significance, 4) autonomy and 5) feedback. The first three of these can be used to predict how meaningful the work will be. Autonomy will predict how much responsibility the person doing the job feels. Feedback will predict how much the person will know about the results of their work. (1978:183)

These five job characteristics can be combined to determine a Motivating Potential Score (MPS) for a job. This MPS, in turn, can predict things like job satisfaction, absenteeism, and the intrinsic motivation of the tasks. In other words, the characteristics of a job will affect how motivated the person who does that job will be to do it.

The Job Characteristics Model and the Motivating Potential Score were applied to volunteers by Valerie Millette and Marylen Gagne, who tested the applicability of the Job Characteristics Model to volunteers. While this model had been used in the past when evaluating the quality of paid work, it had never before been tested in the volunteer sector, to measure volunteer performance. The authors used it to measure internal motivation associated with the specific jobs that volunteers were asked to do. They concluded that "job design is one useful tool to enhance volunteer autonomous motivation, satisfaction and engagement" (Millette &Gagne 2008, 20) and that organizations should take the Job Characteristics Model into consideration when designing the tasks for volunteers. Specifically, they said that an attempt should be made to increase skill variety and create less monotonous jobs by combining tasks and establishing contacts between the volunteer and the client or co-workers (2008: 20). The authors advocate enhancing the volunteers' satisfaction by enhancing the design of the job, by taking into account the characteristics developed by Hackman and Oldham in the Job Characteristics Model.

Volunteers can contribute in many ways to an organization. It is up to the organization to understand what conditions must exist to make this happen and to make the volunteer feel empowered and motivated.

GENDER AND VOLUNTEERING

Since we live in a time when traditional gender roles are being challenged and changed, it is no surprise that this has carried over to the world of volunteering. It is important for community agencies to understand that their traditional/historic base of volunteers may have been women, but that now things are different. Or are they? In what ways have things changed and it what ways are the old truths still true?

Historians who have studied the relationship between women and volunteering generally agree that, traditionally community welfare was considered the responsibility of the woman. Volunteer work provided a way for women to enter the public sphere in an acceptable way, when working for money was not considered acceptable. In addition, "volunteer work, bearing the stigma of being unpaid, was assigned to the female sphere. It fulfilled cultural expectations that women should be compassionate and nurturing. In turn, philanthropic work contributed to the definition of gender roles: becoming a woman included learning how to volunteer" (Musik &Wilson 2008, 172). The volunteer role was, therefore, traditionally feminized. At the beginning of the feminist movement of the 1970's, feminist leaders began to claim that volunteerism exploited women by having them work for no pay.

There has been much discussion and research around gender and volunteering, mostly centered around the question of whether women are naturally more nurturing and, therefore, more likely to volunteer, or if they are socialized in that direction. Is it cultural? Is it cross cultural? In a way this might really be more of an area for anthropologists to research. It might be interesting

to study many different types of societies and the gender of the nurturer in them. Within current American society, there might also be differences that could be seen in different ethnicities or different socio-economic levels.

While we are on the subject of genders, it also interesting to explore how the recipients of the services respond to different genders. How does gender factor in for the "client", not just for the volunteer. For example, certain older adults may only want a volunteer who is of their same gender. An older woman might not feel comfortable with a young man visiting her. She might prefer that her volunteer be a young woman. This is something agencies need to consider. They need not necessarily go along with it. They might be able to encourage the client to be open. However, it could be an issue.

Naomi Gerstel (2000) has studied the "feminine" nature of caregiving both inside the home-to family and friends- and outside the home---through more formal volunteer work. She explains that, at the center of the discussion of gender and difference, which is part of feminist studies, is the "women's presumed special ability to nurture and give care." (2000: 468) She suggests four possible, different causal explanations for this. 1) The first is that the differences in caregiving between men and women come from the biological makeup of men and women. 2) The second is that girls and boys have been socialized into certain roles and have internalized them. 3) The third is that these differences are not caused by either biology or by internalization. Instead they are related to power structures, and social expectations in our society. 4) The fourth "raises the possibility that gender may influence caregiving only through its association

with other characteristics and that gender itself may have no independent effect" (2000: 469). An example of another characteristic that influences caregiving would be employment. In other words, in a society where most women are not employed, they will be more likely to be the caregivers both inside and outside the home. "The escalating rates of women's participation in the labor, force…have significantly reduced both the ability and willingness of women to provide the caregiving and nurturance…" (2000: 470). She asks if the amount and the type of employment that women have influences their level of caregiving, both inside the home and as volunteers outside the home.

Her study consisted of interviewing 324 women, whom she broke into two groups—those employed and those neither employed nor looking for employment, as well as half the husbands of each group. She was interested in finding out what the effect of women working for pay has on the amount of caregiving women give for no pay. She concludes that "employed women are beginning to look a little like employed men" (Gerstel 2000: 474). However, even though unemployed women do more volunteering and caregiving than employed women, employed men still do less than employed women. She concludes that, "women are…the keeper of friends, neighbors, and even those strangers served by local volunteer groups" (2000: 475). At the same time, however, the "changing structure of women's lives is very clearly changing the structure and organization of caregiving" (2000: 475). Gerstel also finds something that may be good news for community based volunteering organizations. She found that whereas "traditional", unemployed women are more likely to direct their caregiving to relatives, employed women are more

likely to direct their caregiving to volunteering and doing community work (2000: 481).

Karniol, Grosz and Schorr (2003) studied the issue of gender and volunteering. They say that, traditionally, females are associated with an ethic of care, whereas males are associated with an ethic of justice. In other words, females would volunteer out of a sense of caring and compassion, while males are, in general, more motivated to do things out of a sense of justice. They wanted to determine two things. The first thing was whether females actually did have higher caring scores. And secondly they wanted to find out if a higher caring score led to a higher volunteering rate.

Their study first found that individuals with more feminine identity did indeed have higher caring scores. "Specifically, girls and individuals high in femininity evidenced higher caring scores than did boys and individuals high in masculinity" (Korniol, Grosz & Schorr, 2003: 17). They also found that "adrogynous individuals did not evidence higher caring scores than did highly feminine individuals" (2003: 17). Their first conclusion was that gender role orientation was the greatest predictor of a high caring score.

They then went on to ask if a higher caring score led to a greater likelihood of volunteering. They wanted to know whether the caring scores of those who volunteered were different from those who did not. They came to the conclusion that "volunteering and gender were found to interact such that for girls, the caring scores of those who volunteered were not significantly higher than those who did not volunteer, a finding we did not expect." (Korniol, Grosz

& Schorr, 2003: 118) They also found that the caring scores of the boys who volunteered were no different from the caring scores of the girls who volunteered. Their study points to a few conclusions. The first is that, for girls, caring scores were not necessarily a predictor of a likelihood to volunteer, since many girls with high caring scores did not end up volunteering. Another conclusion was that, for boys, though, a higher caring score is more likely to lead to volunteering (2003: 18).

Agencies need to keep in mind that volunteer positions traditionally filled by women should not be stereotyped as "female positions". They also need to keep in mind that as more women are joining the paid workforce, their attitude toward volunteering is changing.

AGE AND VOLUNTEERING

Agencies need to be practical. Two things are happening at once. More women are entering the work force, which makes them less available for volunteering. At the same time, many people are living longer, and are looking for meaningful things to do during their retirement period. Agencies need to realize that the retired populations in their community may be their greatest resource for volunteers. However, they must also realize the special steps they need to take when working with older volunteers.

Gender and age are related when it comes to volunteers. If volunteering in the past was largely an area for women, now that women are working more for pay, they are less available for volunteering. The next demographic group that

should be tapped is older people. This is according to Strom and Strom (1994) who say that schools, as one example, can no longer rely on mothers as their primary source of volunteers. They have been replaced by retired people, grandparents (1994: 1).

How can older adults be engaged in a successful way? The authors have presented guidelines for educators to utilize older adults, specifically grandparents. Their main point is that successful programs take into consideration the needs of the older volunteers and structure their volunteer programs so that the older volunteers can meet their own needs. Specifically, they say that grandparents are interested in improving their influence and relationships in their families and communities.

Grandparents, as well as other older adults, today, are a good source of volunteers for a few reasons.

> The emerging concept of productive aging acknowledges that most grandparents are physically and/or mentally capable of contributing to society, the duration between formal retirement and frailty has been extended, and people want to remain active so that their life can continue to have purpose, meaning and satisfaction. (Strom &Strom 1994: 2)

The fact that, in today's world, grandparents are healthier, more educated and have more free time than in past generations makes them "an abundant and growing natural resource." (1994: 2) When you add the fact that many mothers, who in the past were available to volunteer, are now employed, turning to older adults makes even more sense.

Strom and Strom (1994) emphasize that, while caring about children and being well motivated, is a good place to begin, in order for a volunteering program to be successful there must be institutional support. They provide specific recommendations. These are the most important and useful to schools instituting such a program:

1) The principal should give the teachers a Volunteer Assignment Request Form, to fill out, which lists specific tasks they want the volunteers to work on. (*included in Handbook)*

2) Grandparents, or other older adults, should identify their interests. This can be done by filling out a form (*included in the Handbook*) This will give the administration an idea of the volunteer's background, interests, and expertise.

3) Volunteers need to be screened before they are allowed into the classroom. The National Child Protection Act (H.R. 1237) asks that all the states to be part of a national data bank which tracks abusers.

4) A complete orientation needs to include legal issues, educational issues, and guidelines for behavior that have been established by the district board of education.

5) Volunteers should be given several options, and then they should choose the assignment they are most interested in doing. They should also be given options to change assignments. There are many reasons for this. If a volunteer is not getting satisfaction out of one task, they should not feel embarrassed to switch to a different one. Strom and Strom point out that it

is unrealistic to expect a binding decision at the beginning, when volunteers are not familiar with the specific tasks they will be doing.

Morrow Howell (2006) compares the volunteer experience and opportunities that exist for younger versus older people and she asserts that opportunities for volunteering and service must be developed that will appeal to people across all phases of their lives. While people's first association with volunteer service is probably young people-- through colleges and universities, programs like Teach for America, the Peace Corps, etc.—she emphasizes that the programs that utilize young people are different from those that utilize older adults, in a few important ways.

The first difference in programs that are designed for younger versus older adults is in the type of commitment that is required. Younger people typically volunteer for shorter term, intense experiences, over the course of a few weeks to months. These may include travel, where the volunteer is totally immersed in the work. On the other hand, the opportunities for volunteer service for older adults usually require a different type of commitment. Older adults are usually asked to work fewer hours a week, for a longer time period.

The second difference, according to Morrow-Howell, is actually an outgrowth of this first difference, and it involves the type of work the different age groups do. The type of commitment required of older adults, which is a few hours a week over an extended time period, lends itself to a different type of work, than short intensive volunteering. It lends itself more to mentoring,

coaching and tutoring. Usually the older adult provides this service to an individual, such as a child or an older adult who needs assistance.

The third difference is what Morrow-Howell calls desired outcomes. Youth service has the goals of promoting such things as personal development and political tolerance for the volunteer him/herself. On the other hand, she says that services provided by older adults are more concerned with the outcome for the recipient of the service.

> Youth service programs seem to exist primarily to help the young volunteers—to build human and social capital, to make better and more tolerant citizens, to improve the young person's capacity for employment…On the other hand, older-adult service programs focus primarily on the service recipients-on the children, youth and families receiving the service (2006: 39).

One implication of this finding, is that it is probably a good idea for an agency to have a range of ages for the volunteers, as long as it is appropriate for their mission and goals this seems reasonable. The younger person is still developing—socially, politically, career wise. The older adult is more able to focus on the recipient. This does not necessarily, mean that the older adult is always more effective, though. Even though the younger volunteer has personal goals, that does not mean he/she is not going to be a very effective volunteer.

These three differences make sense from a life-course perspective. The types of roles that older adults take on—such as mentoring, coaching and advising—are more suited for people who have more life and work experience and more maturity and patience. (Morrow-Howell 2006: 40) She concludes that "youth services are about building capacity, whereas service programs for older

adults are about, using, honoring and maintaining capacity" (2006: 40). In other words, in the case of the younger volunteer, the volunteer him/herself may be the one getting the most out of the experience. The volunteer is the one who is built up, whereas with older adults, the recipients, are the ones who are built up.

There are many practical implications from this. Since older and younger volunteers are interested in different types of commitments and different types of work, the agency they are volunteering for, should consider that. In addition, young people have the advantage of being able to travel and commit intense periods of times. All this needs to be taken into consideration when structuring a volunteer program.

Agencies also need to consider whether the young volunteers who are there, are there completely voluntarily or if they are there to fulfill a requirement, because if they are there to fulfill a requirement, that may very well affect the experience. Volunteering is associated with free choice, but sometimes people are required to volunteer in order to fulfill a requirement for a class or community service. Although students in classes may seem like a great place to get volunteers, there may be a downside to using volunteers who are required to volunteer. Beehr, Bowling, and Swader (2010) examined required versus nonrequired volunteerism, internal versus external reasons for volunteering.

They wanted to determine if there was a stronger commitment to and satisfaction with their volunteer work, based on whether it was required or not. They studied 273 college students in a midwestern university who were required volunteers, and nonrequired volunteers. They found, not surprisingly, that required volunteers continued to have less intrinsic motivation than nonrequired

volunteers. They concluded that "teaching a course that requires volunteer work might influence students' motivation in undesirable ways" (Beehr, Bowling & Swader 2010, 279). This is another way that age interacts with volunteering. The implication of this is that agencies need to agree to accept volunteers as part of a course with their eyes wide open. They need to be aware of what that means, and they probably need to work closely with the professor of the class, and discuss this with him/her.

Sally Raskoff and Richard Sundeen (1999) wrote a very comprehensive analysis of community service programs in high schools. They found that these volunteer experiences typically take place in the following community organizations: public and parochial schools, municipal governments, health clinics, playgrounds, Chamber of Commerce, police departments, church-affiliated programs, youth groups, and environmental conservation organizations (1999: 90).

Most schools encourage their students to volunteer and many require them to. In the 1980's and 1990's, throughout the Bush and Clinton Administrations, the federal government sponsored several initiatives in order to increase volunteer participation in schools and communities. One of these was the 1990 National Community Service Act which provided funding for pilot programs for local community service. In addition to federal programs, many states also provided funding for community service. For example, Maryland requires that all public schools have a service requirement of seventy five hours in order to graduate from high school.

The purpose of having young people volunteer is not only to benefit society by their contribution, but to benefit the young people themselves. Volunteering will, hopefully, lead to self-esteem, academic skills, career and occupational direction, community involvement and political skills (Raskoff & Sundeen 1999: 75). Through volunteer work, young people become socialized and learn about values and behaviors that will benefit society in the future. The experience can also help their social development and give them a sense of responsibility and leadership. Raskoff and Sundeen identify three main areas in which volunteering has a positive impact. "There are three general areas of program rationales that highlight different benefits of community service experience. The first, which centers on personal, social, and career development, focuses on the individual; the second which centers on academic skills, focuses on other school; and the third, which is based on civic engagement, emphasizes the societal aspects of service. If taken seriously by program administrators, each rationale plays an important role in shaping and guiding the development and implementation of a community service program" (1999: 80).

The authors discuss certain areas that can become problems between the community organizations and the schools. The areas they discuss have implications for schools, but not only for schools. They are also applicable to other community organizations. The first is when there is not a clear liaison between the school and the organization. Often teachers who complain about being overloaded with other work try to avoid taking on additional responsibilities in this area. Successful volunteer programs make sure this happens. Another problem is in the area of liability. The community

organizations have to assume liability because the volunteers are located in their workspace. Larger organizations do not usually have problems getting insurance, but smaller organizations may not be able to afford it. A third issue that arises is that of transportation. The community organizations are not able to provide transportation. They also emphasize the importance of communication so that the community organization is well aware of the school's educational goals and can help implement them (1999: 92).

The authors also were interested in student's assessments of their experiences. They found that what made the volunteer experience most positive for the students was 1)helping others, 2) seeing the consequences of their service, 3) feeling appreciated, 4) having an opportunity for social interaction with friends and with new people and 5) having fun. When asked what they liked least, the authors found that one-fifth of the students said there was nothing they didn't like. Of those that did cite things they didn't like they mentioned 1) boredom, 2) having to fulfill a pre-set number of hours, 3) doing certain tasks they didn't like and 4) personal issues, such as feeling tired or not liking the food. In terms of training, they found that about half of the students reported being trained, evaluated, or recognized for their work. In general, students felt that they had learned about themselves, as well as how to help others in their community (1999: 98).

Philip Rozario (2006) explores the area of baby boomers and volunteering. Ageing baby boomers will be a group that agencies will want to utilize. He cites statistics which say that volunteer rates are slightly lower for people 65 and older

than for baby boomers in their 40s and 50s. However the older group spent more time/hours volunteering (2006: 32). He says it is difficult to predict the future when it comes to baby boomers and volunteering. However, he says that the fact that baby boomers are considered to be better educated and healthier than the current cohort of older adults, may indicate they will be more likely to volunteer. The factor that might work against that, however, would be if the economy is weak. If the economy is weak, baby boomers may end up spending more time in the labor market and have less time for volunteering. He expects there to be a connection between how financially secure the baby boomers are, and how willing they are to volunteer (2006: 35).

Each age group offers something unique to an agency. Young people bring certain positive qualities and older people bring others. Agencies need to understand their volunteers in terms of their age. They need to have a background with which to understand the volunteer's attitudes that come with the age bracket they are in.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS WHEN UTILIZING VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Schools, while they share some qualities with other community based institutions, are, in some ways, in a category of their own. It is very important for volunteer coordinators in schools to know how to utilize their volunteers most effectively and also to understand what issues are involved in school based

volunteer programs. It is very useful for them to learn about already existing successful models.

According to two researchers at the University of Wisconsin, Thomas Yawkey and Steven Silvern (1975), "the effective use of volunteers within the classroom is one large but untapped source which can help reduce the adult-pupil ratio in the schools" (1975: 289). They believe that the answer to the problem of too many students to too few teachers is the use of volunteers. They have presented a series of six steps that schools should incorporate in order to build successful paraprofessional/volunteer programs. I am including the six steps because organizations, such as schools, though not only schools, can use these six steps as a check list. It can be a useful checklist for them to identify what they are already doing, and what they need to do in addition to what they are doing. These steps simplify and clarify the process.

1) The professional staff of the school should determine the specific needs of the school. The classroom teacher needs to have a clear idea of what services they want volunteers to do. Then these tasks should be broken up into component parts, so that the volunteers are given small, specific tasks and are not overwhelmed.

2) The school needs to identify the interested and available people and determine what their specific skills are. Volunteers should be looked for at senior citizen centers, industry, fraternal organizations etc. Then their skills can be determined through a survey.

3) The skills of the volunteer should be matched with the needs of the school. The preference of the paraprofessional should be taken into consideration. If the relationship is going to work, it is important that the volunteer is comfortable with their assignment.

4) There need to be orientation and preparation sessions. During these sessions, the professionals and the volunteers can get to know each other, and the volunteer can learn about the school, grade level goals, etc.

5) Volunteers need to be trained carefully and in an organized fashion.

6) Follow up programs need to be planned for the benefit of both the teachers and the volunteers. The volunteers need to be made to realize that they are an important part of the process (Yawkey & Silvern, 1975: 290-291).

Yawkey and Silern have also provided a list of qualities that professionals should look for in volunteers. Many of these qualities are difficult to assess in initial meetings with volunteers, as they are when interviewing employees also. As with employees, interviews as well as reference checking can help. In addition, the volunteer might be told that there is an "initial" period where the organization and the volunteer decide if it is a good fit. After that period of time, a polite, but frank conversation could be had if the organization feels the volunteer does not have those qualities. It could be simply telling the volunteer that, while the organization appreciates his/her interest, the organization thinks there is probably a better fit somewhere else for the particular interests of the volunteer. These qualities include being warm and understanding, respecting children, being able to maintain discipline, being able to take suggestions from

other adults, relating constructively to children, having ethical and profession responsibility, being well groomed, being open minded and creative, loving children and being patient with them, and being honest (1975: 292). They conclude by saying that "a school volunteer can make the difference between success and failure, between pride and shame, between turning off education and tuning in learning for principals, teachers, parents, and children" (1975: 292).

June Million, the Director of Public Information for the National Association of Elementary School Principals, (2004) says that schools should consider the public relations points that schools can earn from their volunteers, and should take into consideration the opportunities volunteers present to improve the school's relationship with the community. Rather than being critics of the school program, Million suggests that volunteers have more respect for the teachers and the principals and a greater understanding of how the school functioned. However, in order to make sure the volunteers have a positive experience and association with the school, the school needs to incorporate a program that welcomes them, successfully integrates them into the school, and addresses their needs. She says it is important to welcome them warmly, give them necessary training, provide a dedicated volunteer room for them, give them a thorough orientation, insist that the classroom teachers are in constant communication with the volunteers, publicly recognize the volunteers or their accomplishments, establish personal relationships with each of the volunteers, and consider providing transportation particularly to elderly volunteers.

Schools provide a unique opportunity to incorporate volunteers who live in the community in the lives of the children in that community. This can be a win-win situation, as long as the proper structure and procedures are put into place. Ideally, both the volunteer and the student will be inspired by the other.

VOLUNTEERS WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities certainly need not be on the receiving end of volunteerism. It is important that their strengths be called upon by community agencies. While in certain situations a person with a disability needs extra help, in other ways that person can give extra help. They can help someone else who has the same disability they have. That could be reassuring. Or they could utilize a strength that has nothing to do with their disability. For these reasons, another option for a source of volunteers for community based organizations is to utilize volunteers who have disabilities. Organizations who go this route need to incorporate certain strategies to be successful. The Chronicle of Philanthropy, in 2006, laid out the steps that need to be taken to do this. They say that, first and foremost, there needs to be an openness and sensitivity to the needs of the volunteers and to their abilities. The organization needs to make it easy for people to join in. This requires familiarizing themselves with the needs and disabilities of the individual volunteers and accommodating them. It is also important to communicate clearly. This may require special accommodations such as facing the volunteer and speaking clearly and slowly. When working with a visually impaired person, it is important to make sure each person who

addresses them, introduces him or herself clearly. It is also important to take into consideration how much personal space the volunteer needs, if the volunteer is physically handicapped and in, for example, a wheelchair.

Accommodations for volunteers with disabilities can go far to make the experience what it should be.

SCREENING, TRAINING AND SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

In an age of budget cuts, agencies may try to use volunteers for work that formerly would have been done by paid employees. However, if this is done, it needs to be done in the right way, or it will backfire. Not all volunteer programs are equally successful in training, screening and keeping volunteers. Agencies need to be aware of what factors go into making these three things successful.

Jean Baldwin Grossman and Kathryn Furano (1999) have written a thoughtful piece about the complexities of having volunteers take on more of the responsibilities of an organization. They speak about the fact that the nature of volunteering is in transition, because volunteers are being asked to undertake more complex tasks.

> This trend is particularly apparent in the social service arena as the responsibility for delivering a range of services transfers to the local level. Rather than supplementing and supporting the efforts of paid staff members, more organizations today are asking volunteers to serve in more staff-like roles to control costs. Given this trend, organizations that utilize volunteers are beginning to realize that many staff issues, such as pay, working conditions and training, also apply to volunteers who play

critical roles or make major time commitments (Grossman, Fura 1999: 201).

In addition, programs that utilize volunteers now need to give consideration to the personal benefits their volunteers get. On the other side of the coin, the organizations have to realize that the volunteers reflect on them and for that reason, too, they need to give a lot of attention to the volunteer program. For example, in terms of public relations, if volunteers report to others about how successful their experience at a particular organization has been, that helps the organization's reputation in the community. The opposite is also true. Particularly in the age of blogs, etc., an organization never really knows when it might receive positive or negative publicity.

Grossman and Furano write about the three major components of a successful volunteer program—screening, training and ongoing management and support. Selecting the appropriate volunteers is the first step in any volunteer program. Interest and good intentions alone will not make a good volunteer. There must be a screening process which considers the specific responsibilities the volunteer will be taking on.

Since the agency is entrusting the safety of those receiving the services to the volunteer, the agency needs to be sure that it is not risking that safety when using a particular volunteer. This is particularly true when the agency serves children, mentally disabled and fragile elderly. References and police background checks may be in order. All Americorps programs, for example require criminal history background checks.

The second thing that needs to be screened for is in the area of skills. It is necessary that volunteers bring appropriate skills to the task. Of course, the agency will be able to do some of the training, but the volunteer should come with a baseline –of skills and psychological makeup--which will allow them to be successful after the training. During the screening, an organization has to assess many things. For example, an organization would need to decide if a particular candidate is more suited to being a tutor who teaches a particular subject, or a mentor whose job it is to form a larger, meaningful relationship with a child. Screening sets up the volunteer for success or failure so it is a critical step.

During the screening process, it is important to reach an understanding about the time commitment that is expected. Both the volunteer and the agency need to be clear about their expectations. "It is a waste of time and resources to train and supervise a volunteer who leaves the program soon after starting. Such attrition can also seriously damage a volunteer program's relationship with a host organization." (Grossman, Fura 1999: 203) This is extremely important when the main job of the volunteer is to form a relationship with another, particularly someone who is in need. That person might feel rejected if the volunteer does not show up when expected and could lead to negative outcomes, particularly in children who are most vulnerable to feel rejected.

The second critical part of the volunteer program is training and skills. The authors believe that many programs underestimate the training that their volunteers need. Particularly when volunteers are recruited to mentor, the training piece is crucial. The volunteer needs to have a good understanding of

the program's goals and understand how they fit into those larger goals. For example, education about child development needs to be part of this, when working with children.

Specifically, the authors speak about two types of training that is helpful for volunteers—content focused training and process focused training. Content focused training refers to training in specific tasks while process focused training refers to understanding how to function in the organization. Process focused training includes things like understanding the rules and procedures of the program.

The third critical factor in implementing a volunteer program is Ongoing Management and Support. The organization needs to offer the types of programs where the volunteer can succeed even if they have limited experience, by placing them in an appropriate position. The "programs must ensure that the range of opportunities they offer will allow the novice service providers to succeed" (Grossman, Fura 1999: 209). It is important to make connections that will succeed and then supervise them to assure they will. The authors point to a very successful program which Temple University has set up between elementary school children and older adults in a residential facility. "Linking the right volunteers to the right job is also a critical step in making a successful program" (1999: 209). Regular supervision and monitoring is very important. Some organizations use strategy where they have long-term or experienced volunteers supervising the newer ones. AmeriCorps is one such program, where AmeriCorps members who have committed to serve for at least one year,

supervise hundreds of part time tutors. In all things, communication is necessary. Grossman and Furano conclude that, "to close the gap between rhetoric and reality, effective volunteer programs need to incorporate the critical elements of infrastructure into their regular regimen" (1999: 217). Volunteers can't be considered "extras". Successful volunteer programs require real infrastructure and real support and real planning.

BEST PRACTICES FOR ORGANIZATIONS WHO USE VOLUNTEERS

It is very important for community agencies to incorporate best practices. The better they are in incorporating them, the fewer problems will arise. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Jeffrey Brudney (1999) has addressed the subject of best practices in volunteer program design and administration, specifically as it relates to the public sector. Although many non- profits utilize volunteers, government agencies also utilize them to a large extent. Within the public sector, the greatest number of volunteers can be found in education, where volunteers can be found working in the library, tutoring, mentoring, offering career guidance, providing arts and crafts programs, working in computer labs, helping with the chorus and with dramatic and musical programs, working on science fairs and school yearbooks and newspapers. In other words, there is a wide range of programs where volunteers can be found.

Brudney proposes that organizations pay close attention to best practices because there is a relationship between best practices and the benefits that the organization receives from their volunteer program. He begins by dispelling two myths: the first is that volunteers are "free" and cost the agency no money and the second is that volunteers can't be either managed or fired. Volunteers are not "free" because all the literature is very clear that successful volunteer programs need resources allocated to them. They need to be given an importance in the agency. Often this needs to be financial resources, even if that just means part, or all, of one or more of the paid employees time. In other words, part, or all, of the salaries of some of the paid employees must be allocated to supervising the volunteers. Of course, the size of the agency and the size of the volunteer program will determine how much is needed. It is a big mistake for agencies to think that volunteer programs do not require attention and a good structure, both of which require money. Other expenses might include transportation reimbursements, mailings, recognition events, etc. In addition, since agencies first commitment is to their clients, not their volunteers, if the volunteer is not serving the client's or student's needs, the volunteer needs to be let go. Although the agency has a commitment to its volunteers, its greater commitment is to the population it is serving.

The recommended best practices Brudey discusses include:

1) Getting Support from High Level Officials—Often this is achieved by having a manager or coordinator or director of volunteer services. Research has shown

that usually, this is not a full time position, but it is, nonetheless, a critical position.

2) Creating Job Descriptions for Volunteer Positions—"With written job descriptions available, it becomes possible to target and recruit volunteers to fill specific positions" (1999: 238).

3) Providing Written Policies to Govern the Volunteer Program- This will prove to be helpful down the line if there is a problem.

4) Providing Necessary Support Activities—This must begin with a proper orientation. The orientation should consist of a piece that provides information about the organization and its mission and introduces the volunteer to the specific culture of the organization. However, the support must continue throughout, and must be a necessary ongoing part of the experience.

5) Empowering Experienced (Senior) Volunteers to Manage Newer (Junior) Volunteers-This serves a few purposes. One of the most important of them is to reinvigorate the senior volunteers and reward them for their service by giving them added responsibility and leadership roles. In certain organizations, the volunteers are actually self managing, with senior volunteers supervising newer ones.

6) Formally and Informally Recognizing the Contribution of the Volunteers—It is necessary for volunteers to feel appreciated and this can be done through formal recognition ceremonies or programs, but also through informal means.

Sometimes informal conversations, where the work is discussed, and the coordinator praises the volunteer means more than a larger ceremony.

7) Evaluating the Volunteers which Includes Maintaining Proper Records about their Performance—Evaluation is problematic, according to Brudney, because once you evaluate someone they feel like they are being judged rather than giving a gift or a donation. Nonetheless this can be very valuable for the volunteer, the volunteer supervisor and the volunteer manager. In order to successfully carry this out, organizations need to keep formal records for their volunteers.

8) Allocating Sufficient Resources and Budget to Implement a Proper Program-Volunteer programs are not free. There must be money allocated for reimbursement of volunteers' expenses and ways of communicating with volunteers such as newsletters.

9) Providing Liability Insurance Coverage for Volunteers—Legal experts agree that organizations need to purchase liability insurance.

10) Training and Development for Employees Who Work With Volunteers—Due to the fact that there is very limited formal education in the area of volunteers, so most of the employees working with the volunteer have not had formal education in this area, the organization itself must take on this responsibility.

Agencies should not be haphazard with their volunteers and volunteer programs. By instituting best practices, they are reducing their chances of running into problems, and they are increasing their chances of having a

successful program, both from their standpoint and from the standpoint of the volunteers.

Volunteers can make a critical difference in the work of an organization. As this paper shows, volunteers can provide critical resources for organizations which might not otherwise be able to afford additional employees. While engaged in such work, volunteers can not only contribute to organizations and causes to which they are committed, but they may also gain invaluable experience.

FEEDBACK FROM VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

I gave this literature review to the volunteer coordinator of a community based social service agency that works with the elderly. Her agency uses volunteers in many different capacities. Here is some of her feedback.

--She said that one thing to keep in mind is that one agency can have a variety of volunteer programs. For example, her agency has one full time year round volunteer who receives a monthly stipend and comes to them from another established program. They also have another volunteer program for people who want to do friendly visiting once a week. They also have programs with schools where students volunteer to do programs with the elderly on a "once in a while" basis. In addition, they have some people (from schools or other organizations) who volunteer just once a year to deliver food. She said that one agency does not mean one volunteer program. For this reason, different people in her

organization coordinate different parts of the volunteer program, even though she is the official volunteer coordinator. In other words, she was saying, that sometimes, even though there is an official volunteer coordinator, in reality there may be several volunteer coordinators. The reality is not always that neat.

--She definitely agreed that the younger volunteers have a variety of motives, including social. One of their programs involves working with a mostly singles organization that wants to do social service. She believes that the social component is a definite draw for the volunteers.

--She was extremely interested in some of the assessment tools. She said she is going to use them, or a modified version of them. She thought they would be helpful to her, as well as a good way to begin discussion with the volunteers. She said she might incorporate some of the questions, informally, when she meets and interviews potential volunteers.

--Her agency does not have formal recognition programs for volunteers, though she has heard that many years ago they did. She thinks that they should begin to incorporate them.

--In terms of the legal issues, she said that her agency has insurance policies, but she is not that familiar with them, and probably should become more familiar with them. She was very interested in the potential liability of the organization.

--She sees nothing wrong in younger volunteers wanting to "get ahead" by volunteering. She believes that this is good for the volunteer and good for the

organization, and it is only natural that younger people may be using volunteering as a stepping stone.

--In terms of gender and volunteering, she said that most of their volunteers are female. Despite the research findings that this is changing, she does not see it changing that much in her organization.

--She found the section about age and volunteering very interesting. Her agency participates in a program called "Seniors Helping Seniors". This is when older adults volunteer to help other, more needy, older adults. She thinks this is a very successful program. She said that, while the paper spoke about the value of older adults working with children, they can also work with other older adults.

In general, I found that the volunteer coordinator was able to take the information in the paper, and apply it to her particular organization. As she read the research, she related to it in a very personal way, in terms of her organization. I found it interesting that she does not have a problem with volunteers "using" her organization to get ahead. She does not see it this way. I think that that can help her be successful with younger volunteers who are career building and resume building. In terms of specific changes, it seems the one change she thinks she should make is to have a more formal recognition program for volunteers. I assume that each volunteer coordinator will see, in this research, things that they already do, things they don't do and don't want to do, and things they don't do and want to do. It is this third part that can be most helpful for the coordinators.

CONCLUSION AND THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT "TAKE-AWAY" ITEMS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE LITERATURE

While it would be useful for volunteer coordinators to familiarize themselves with the literature in depth, the reality is that it is always helpful to have a simple checklist to refer to. I am therefore concluding the paper with what I consider to be the ten most important take-away items from this research.

I believe that, when done well, the relationship between volunteers and organization can be a transformative experience for the volunteer and a highly useful tool for the organization. From my own personal experience, I think that volunteers are often idealistic and see the organization in the best light possible. They can bring that idealism back to the organization, but only if their experience is suited to them and if the process is coordinated well and in a way that it has meaning for them. Here is the list of the "top ten" take-aways that should be applied.

1) Organizations should take the personal motivation of the volunteers into consideration at all stages of the volunteer process. The first step in this process is to assess those motivations. There are various assessment tools. Each volunteer can be assigned a Motivating Potential Score, which can be a good predictor of success.

2) Agencies must place resources—financial and personnel into their volunteer program in order for it to succeed. Although volunteers do not usually get paid (there are some exceptions), volunteer programs are not cost free.

3) It is extremely important to screen volunteers. There are many reasons for this, including making sure the volunteer is a good fit for the agency, assigning the volunteer to an appropriate position, and protecting the agency legally.

4) It is critical that the volunteers have good relationships with their supervisors in order for the volunteers to feel empowered. An unempowered volunteer will not be helpful to the agency.

5) The first few months are the most "fragile" for the volunteer. Volunteers should not be left on their own during this time. They need structure, supervision and appreciation.

6) Young volunteers and older volunteers volunteer for different reasons. Young volunteers are very centered on what they will get out of the experience, whereas older adults are more focused on what the recipients receive. That does not, however, mean that older adults are necessarily better for an agency. Each agency needs to assess.

7) Although classes that require their students to volunteer might seem like a good place for agencies to find volunteers, the literature shows that these volunteers are less motivated than those who volunteer on their own. This needs to be taken into consideration.

8) Traditionally, volunteering was largely an area for women. Now that more women are in the workforce, agencies who need volunteers should consider directing their marketing towards retired adults.

9) Schools who are utilizing volunteers have specific things they must consider. They should educate themselves about what issues must be considered when volunteers come into schools.

10) Before instituting a volunteer program, an agency must learn about and must address legal issues. Organizations have legal responsibilities towards their volunteers, and must understand that they are legally liable for their volunteers.

Volunteer programs need not be looked at as insignificant pieces of an organization. They can be a very integral part of an organization if certain procedures are followed. In order to get the most out of volunteers, organizations need to put money, time, and staff into making the program successful. The more agencies put into their volunteer programs, the more they will get out of them. In addition, they have a responsibility to the volunteers.

III. Forms And Other Useful Documents To Be Used By Organizations Who Have Volunteers

LEGAL ISSUES TO CONSIDER

(created by Rachel Skoff for Bank Street Integrative Master's Project, 2013)

A. <u>Wages</u>

There are important legal issues, which have an impact on volunteers and their work. For example, there have been several recent, high profile lawsuits, against <u>for</u> <u>profit</u> companies, such as television, media and other companies, in which volunteer interns have sued their employers, claiming that, under the law, they were entitled to be paid for the work that they were doing. The fact that they had been hired as unpaid interns didn't matter; the interns claimed that the employer violated wage laws by not paying the interns for the work they performed (New York Times, Media Decoder, March 14, 2012, The Hollywood Reporter, August 13, 2013).

The employers in the "high profile" cases are usually "for profit" companies. Under the law, all employees ordinarily must be paid for their work. Hiring interns may mean that they do not have to hire and pay someone to perform the work of the intern.

In the high profile lawsuits, the claim was that the employers were taking advantage of the volunteer interns, that the work merely benefitted the employer

and enabled the employers to avoid paying other people for their work ("The Beginning of the End of the Unpaid Internship", Time, May 2, 2012).

The rules are a little different where the volunteer or intern works for a "not-for-profit" or for a public agency. Under the law, the U.S. Department of Labor looks at people "who volunteer or donate their services, usually on a part-time basis, for public service, religious or humanitarian objectives, not as employees and without contemplation of pay, are not considered employees of the religious, charitable or similar **non-profit** organizations that receive their service." U.S. Dept. of Labor, "Volunteers", *e-Laws*, http://www.dol.gov/elaws/esa/flsa/docs/volunteers.asp. This same work applies to volunteer work for public agencies, with the exception that an employee of a public agency may not "volunteer" to do the same work for which he or she is being paid.

Agencies need to make sure that the volunteer is actually a "volunteer", who is working voluntarily, without any expectation of getting paid or receiving anything in return. If the organization for which the person is volunteering, is a "for profit" organization, make sure that the work satisfies the 6 criteria established by the U.S. Department of Labor and by any state labor department that is applicable. If the volunteer is an employee of the public agency for which he or she is volunteering, make sure that the volunteer work is different from the type of work for which the employee gets paid. Even though the person is a volunteer, all laws must be complied with.

B. Possible Liability

Another issue that must be considered in dealing with volunteers is the extent to which actions of the volunteer could cause damage to the organization or to people that the organization serves. In performing their volunteer services on behalf of the organization, someone could get hurt, or the volunteer could cause harm. This could result from an accident, carelessness, lack of qualifications, or even improper conduct by a volunteer. The organization can be responsible or legally liable for this type of harm. In addition, the volunteer could be held legally liable for any harm that the volunteer causes (http://nonprofitrisk.org/).

There are laws that protect both volunteers and certain charitable organizations from liability under certain circumstances, provided that the organization and volunteer were acting in good faith, were not reckless, were not negligent, etc. (http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/downloads/state-liability.pdf).

Therefore, to both live up to the purposes and goals of the organization, and to avoid legal liability, organizations which accept volunteers need to carefully screen and carefully evaluate their volunteers, and try to make sure that they are appropriate for the organization and are appropriately placed; having an insurance policy that covers the volunteer and the organization may also be appropriate (http://nonprofitrisk.org/).

C. Harm or Injury to the Volunteer

Like anyone working at the organization, a volunteer may be injured while working at the organization. Laws that protect the safety of employees at work, ordinarily apply to volunteers as well, and claims based on laws which

protect employees from harassment or discrimination, are also possibilities when it comes to volunteers.

Therefore, the organization should treat the volunteer as the law requires, and as it should treat any employee, with respect to safety, and with respect to how employees are treated.

CHECKLIST OF BEST PRACTICES

(created by Rachel Skoff for Bank Street Integrative Master's Project, 2013)

1) Have we gotten support from high level people in the organization? _____

2) Have we created very specific job descriptions for the volunteer positions? _____

3) Have we provided written policies that govern our program? _____

4) Do we have ongoing support activities? _____

5) Do we have a well put together orientation program? _____

6) Do we have senior/experienced volunteers who can assume leadership roles with the newer, more junior volunteers? _____

7) Do we have programs in place to formally recognize the value of volunteer? _____

8) Do we have a system in place to maintain proper records about volunteers? _____

9) Have we instituted an evaluation system of our volunteers? _____

10) Have we provided enough of a budget to implement a proper program? _____

11) Do we have sufficient liability insurance to cover our volunteers?_____

12) Do we have a program in place to train our employees who work with our volunteers? _____

(SAMPLE) GRANDPARENT VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

(taken from Strom and Strom, 1994)

1.Name _____

2. Address _____

3. Age_____

4.Phone Number_____

5. Age_____

6. Emergency Contact_____

7. My career occupation was_____

8. My hobbies or special talents

are_____

9. The best time of day for me to volunteer is _____

10. I can volunteer on (circle the days) Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thurs Fri

11. The level I want to try out in the beginning is (circle)

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

12. The school subject areas I would like to work on the most are (circle)

Reading   Math Science Writing Spelling Social Studies Art Music

13. I would like to try the tasks that I have checked below.

Individual Help

--Listen to children read

--Give feedback on Math

--Review spelling words

--Help with makeup work

--Practice vocabulary

Group Support

--Before and after school care

--Offer playground supervision

--Drill and practice flash cards

--Guide small group discussions

Clerical Tasks

--Grade student papers

--Prepare bulletin boards

--Reproduce materials

--Take class attendance

Special Activities

--Guide arts and crafts activities

--Discuss hobbies and memories

--Support use of second language

--Read or tell stories to children

ASSESSING MOTIVATION OF VOLUNTEERS THROUGH VOLUNTEERS FUNCTION INVENTORY (VFI) IN ORDER TO GAIN INSIGHT ABOUT THEIR MOTIVATIONS AND REASONS FOR VOLUNTEERING

(Adapted from Clary, et al. 1998)

Please rate each of these on a scale of 1 – 5 –-------1 being the lowest and 5 the highest

1) No matter how badly I've been feeling, volunteering helps me to forget about it_____

2) By volunteering I feel less lonely_____

3) Doing volunteer work relieves me of some of the guilt over being more fortunate than others_____

4) I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself _____

5) I am genuinely concerned about the particular group of people I am serving___

6) I feel compassionate toward people in need_____

7) I feel it is important to help others _____

8) I can do something for a cause that is important to me _____

9) Volunteering can help me to get my foot in the door at a place where I would like to work _____

10) I can make new contacts that might help my business or career_____

11) Volunteering allows me to explore different career options_____

12) Volunteering here will improve my resume_____

13) My friends volunteer_____

14) I hope to meet people with similar interests volunteering_____

15) Volunteering will allow me to gain a new perspective_____

16) By volunteering, I can learn more about the cause I am interested in_____

17) I can explore my own strengths_____

18) Volunteering increases my own self esteem_____

19) Volunteering makes me feel needed_____

20) Volunteering is a way to make new friends_____

VOLUNTEER EVALUATION OF VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE

(created by Rachel Skoff for Bank Street Integrative Master's Project, 2013)

In order to improve and assess the volunteer program please comment on the following based on your experiences volunteering for our organization:

What was your motivation for volunteering? -

_____

_____

_____

How did your experience volunteer compare to what you expected it to be?

_____

_____

_____

Please comment on how responsive the volunteer coordinator was to you.

_____

_____

Did you develop social relationships with other volunteers?

_____

_____

Do you feel that you developed relationships with clients in the organization?

_____

_____

Do you feel that your experience here will help you career wise? If so, in what ways?

_____

_____

_____

Were your skills utilized by the organization? Do you feel that you were given tasks that were appropriate for your skills and interests?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Do you plan to continue to volunteer (either at this organization or another)?

_____

_____

Do you have suggestions to improve the volunteer program?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Would you recommend this volunteer experience to a friend who asked you.

Yes_____ No_____ Not sure_____

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